STRATEGY

2026-2029

OUR JOURNEY

FOUNDATION AND COMMUNITY RESPONSE (2006–2015)

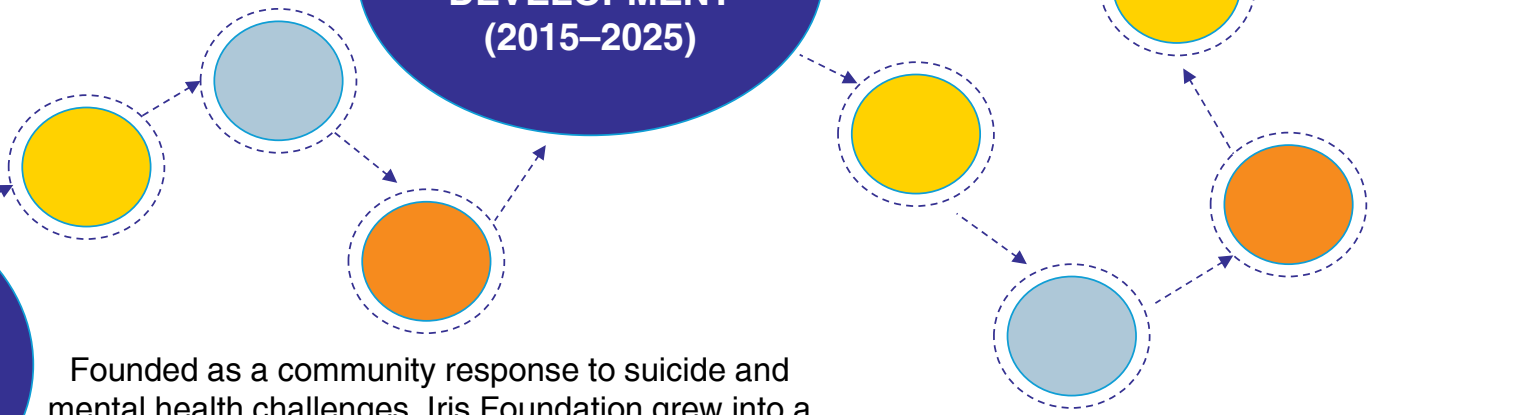
Founded as a community response to suicide and mental health challenges, Iris Foundation grew into a purpose driven charity supporting individuals and families through immediate need and local connection.

GROWTH AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT (2015–2025)

As demand increased, Iris Foundation scaled its response through a portfolio of prevention initiatives and partnerships to strengthen wellbeing and connection across the community.

STRUCTURED PREVENTION (2026–)

Iris Foundation is evolving to provide a more focused, strategic and sustainable prevention approach that closes the gap between coping and crisis, reducing risk and avoiding the need for crisis intervention and its impacts.



OUR JOURNEY

IRIS FOUNDATION AFTER 20 YEARS

- ❑ Strong purpose and community trust
- ❑ Broad set of programs and initiatives
- ❑ Focus on individuals, families, workplaces and communities
- ❑ Increasing demand and complexity
- ❑ Need for financial sustainability and scalable impact

CURRENT EXTERNAL CONTEXT

- ❑ Rising cost of living, social isolation and mental health pressures and emotional fatigue
- ❑ Increasing recognition that crisis response alone is not sufficient
- ❑ Evidence that early intervention reduces long term social and economic costs

NEXT STAGE OF OUR JOURNEY

Iris Foundation is evolving to provide a more focused, strategic and sustainable prevention approach that closes the gap between coping and crisis, reducing risk and avoiding the need for crisis intervention and its impacts.

FROM

- ✓ Prevention as an important concept
- ✓ Broad, diffuse and opportunity led initiatives
- ✓ Initiatives operating independently
- ✓ Funding linked to individual initiatives

TO

- ✓ Structured prevention platform that strengthens capability early, reduces risk and avoids the need for crisis intervention and impacts
- ✓ Integrated pathway portfolios aligned to strategic goals, measurable impact and financial sustainability
- ✓ Prioritised, practical and high impact initiatives

OUR NARRATIVE

PREVENTING HARM

REACTING TO HARM

IMPACT

STRONGER PEOPLE, THRIVING COMMUNITIES, FEWER LIVES LOST

Prevention that changes lives

Earlier investment in people's capacity to navigate life's pressures reduces preventable harm, strengthens communities and protects lives from the devastating impact of suicide.

SOLUTION

PREVENTION THROUGH CAPABILITY, CONFIDENCE AND CONNECTIONS

Prevention cannot be delivered reactively.
It must be built into the everyday experience of people, families, workplaces and communities.

Iris Foundation exists to help close the gap between coping and crisis.
Through practical initiatives embedded in schools, workplaces and community settings, Iris Foundation strengthens the capability, confidence and connection people need to navigate life's pressures before they escalate into crisis. In doing this, Iris Foundation reduces preventable harm, helps build stronger people and more connected, thriving communities.

PROBLEM

PREVENTABLE HARM

The problem is not that support doesn't exist.
The problem is that it often arrives too late.

Too many people are living in a space of quiet struggle, carrying stress, pressure and emotional fatigue without the resilience, confidence or support needed to cope well. They are not in crisis but no longer thriving. This is where risk begins to build. Too often, support systems respond once someone reaches breaking point, rather than strengthening people earlier while they are still functioning but vulnerable. When this gap is not addressed, distress can deepen and the consequences can ripple through families, workplaces and communities.

IRIS FOUNDATION STRATEGY 2026-2029

OUR VISION
A future where fewer lives are lost to suicide because people have the strength, support and skills to face life's challenges.

OUR PURPOSE
To help protect lives from the devastating impact of suicide.

OUR MISSION
To work alongside people and communities to build resilience, foster connection and provide practical support before challenges escalate.

STRATEGIC GOALS	**GROW RESILIENCE, COPING SKILLS AND HEALTHY CONNECTION IN YOUNG PEOPLE**	**SUPPORT WELLBEING, DIGNITY AND CONNECTION THROUGH ADVERSITY**	**STRENGTHEN WELLBEING CAPABILITY IN WORKPLACES AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS**	**BUILD CONNECTED, SUPPORTIVE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES**
OBJECTIVES	Deliver practical programs that help young people build the emotional skills, confidence and relationships they need to navigate life's challenges, strengthen wellbeing and reduce future risk.	Provide targeted initiatives that strengthen wellbeing, confidence and stability for individuals and families facing hardship and change.	Deliver structured prevention initiatives that help workplaces and community organisations build resilience, strengthen wellbeing capability, reduce preventable harm and respond earlier to emerging signs of struggle.	Strengthen belonging, connection and local support so people are less isolated, more supported and better equipped to navigate hardship before it deepens.
PATHWAYS	**Growing Young Minds**	**Strengthening Women and Families**	**Workplace and Community Organisation Wellbeing**	**Building Resilient Communities**
INITIATIVES	Accredited Cool Connections in Schools (9-12 years) Smart Brain Presentation (9-12 years) Connections 2×2 Resilience Workshop (9-14 years) Y-Connections (11-14 years) The Resilience Challenge (15-24 years)	Debbie Gaunt Foundation Because We Care Boutique Community & Business Women's Network (CBWN)	Steady Minds Resilience Training Resilience Assessment and Workshops Accredited Resilience First Aid Training Mental Health First Aid Training Business Wellbeing Partnerships	Men's Mental Health Advisory Committee Targeted Community Partnerships – Tree of Dreams, Men Care Too Regional and Rural Collaboration – Frockin' The Outback, community requests
ENABLERS	**Our Values in Action**	Prevention First; Connection and Collective Impact; Integrity and Accountability; Inclusive by Design; Empowerment and Capability Building		
	Our Sustainability Approach	Strategic Alignment of Initiatives, Sustainable Revenue and Funding; Partnerships and Collaboration; Employee and Volunteer Engagement; Digital Strategy and Capability; Impact Reporting		
MEASUREMENT	Reach and Engagement + Initiative Impact + Community Impact + Organisational Sustainability			